

APPENDIX A

Notice of Preparation of Draft Environmental Impact Report for Wild Turkey
Population Management and Enhancement by the Department of Fish and
Game

A1 through A24



State of California - The Resources Agency

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov>

1416 Ninth Street

Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 653-7203

GRAY DAVIS, Governor



June 16, 2000

To Interested Parties:

The Department of Fish and Game will be the lead agency in the preparation of a draft environmental impact report for the management and enhancement of wild turkey populations. The initial study conducted by the Department determined that this project may have a significant impact to the environment (see attached). A project description, locations, and discussion of possible environmental effects are attached.

The Department is requesting your views related to the scope and content of the environmental information that you recommend be considered in this report. A public meeting will be held in the Resources Building Auditorium, 1416 Ninth Street, Sacramento, California on June 30, 2000, from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Department representatives will be available to receive comments on the scope and content of the proposed draft environmental impact report. You are invited to attend and present your ideas. Written comments will also be accepted at the letterhead address during the 30-day scoping period immediately following receipt of this notice.

Sincerely,

Thomas E. Blankinship
for David S. Zezulak, Ph.D.
Chief, Wildlife Programs Branch

Attachment

cc: Office of Planning and Research
Sacramento, California

Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870

Notice of Preparation of Draft Environmental Impact Report for Wild Turkey Population Management and Enhancement by the Department of Fish and Game

Project Description

Wild turkeys are a resident game bird in California (Fish and Game Code Section 3500), and they are currently well established in much of the lower elevation oak woodlands statewide. Most of these occupied habitats are privately owned, offering limited hunting opportunity for the general public. Additional suitable habitat is available on higher elevation public lands that are not currently well occupied by turkeys.

The proposed project involves the capture and release of wild turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*) into the wild by the Department of Fish and Game. This project is intended to expand wild turkey populations on public lands and provide additional hunting opportunities for the public, consistent with Fish and Game Commission Policy regarding Department management of resident upland game birds. The environmental impacts associated with hunting of wild turkeys are addressed in the Department's resident game bird hunting environmental document.

Seven sites are proposed for wild turkey releases in El Dorado, Plumas, Sierra, Lassen, Mendocino, Shasta, and Trinity Counties (see attached map). All of the proposed release sites are on U.S. Forest Service lands. Turkeys were released at each of the proposed sites in El Dorado, Plumas, Sierra, Lassen, and Trinity Counties in early 1999, and they are also known to exist in the project area of the proposed Mendocino and Shasta County release sites from earlier releases. These proposed releases are intended to enhance existing populations that are not well established in each of these counties.

Approximately 50 turkeys in a 3:1 sex ratio (females:males) will be released at each of the proposed sites, beginning during the winter of 2000/2001. Source stock for release may come from both in and out-of-state sources, to match the best adapted subspecies of wild turkey to the habitat conditions at the proposed release sites. Wild turkeys captured for translocation will be tested for avian diseases of concern in wild turkeys and domestic poultry. Prior to release, the risk of transmission of infectious disease from captured turkeys will be evaluated according to Department disease testing protocols by a Department or other qualified veterinarian. Captured wild turkeys will only be released if they are judged to be of no significant disease risk to other wild or domestic fowl. A portion of the released population at each release site will be radio-marked and monitored by the Department following release to determine movements, survival, productivity, habitat use, and food habits. The project, including the release of turkeys and post-release monitoring may last for up to 3 years. The attached maps illustrate the approximate locations of the proposed release sites. The actual location will depend on accessibility to the area during the winter months. If the site can not be accessed, birds will be released at the nearest possible suitable location not more than 5 miles from the specified site.

In addition to range expansion, the Department is occasionally requested to remove locally undesirable turkeys from urban areas, agricultural areas, and parks. Turkeys are currently proposed for removal from Cuyamaca Rancho State Park in San Diego County, and they will be released at the proposed Trinity County release site. Turkeys trapped by the Department at other undetermined sites will be released at Department-owned Wildlife Areas that currently have established turkey populations (see attached map). These releases will not likely result in additional range expansion.

Possible Environmental Effects

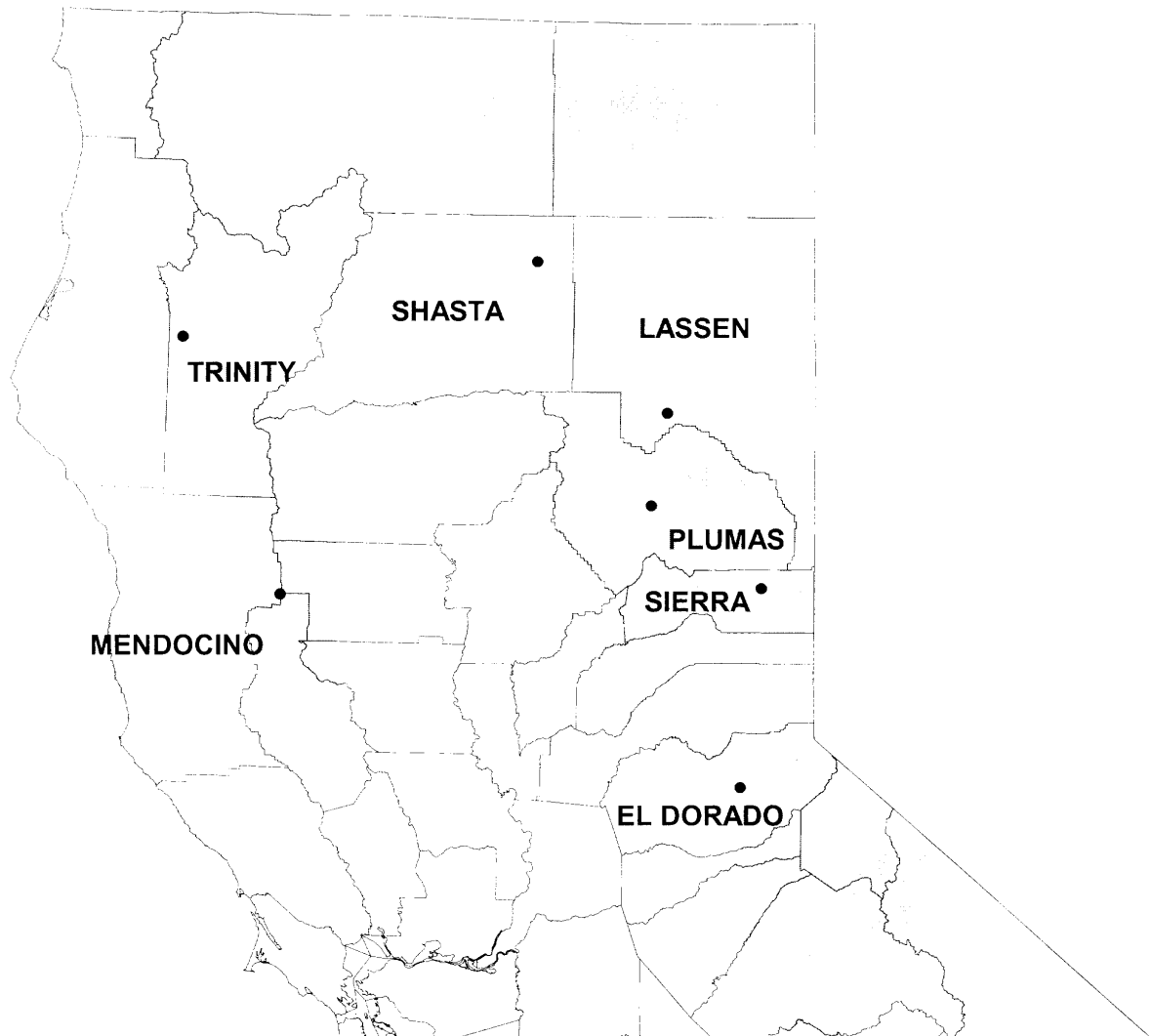
Possible environmental effects of the proposed project are primarily to biological resources. A copy of the initial study conducted by the Department is attached.

Because wild turkeys are not native to California, the introduction of this species into new ecosystems may have an impact to native plants and animals. Wild turkeys are opportunistic omnivores and they may utilize sensitive plants and animals through foraging activities to the point of decline. Impacts may also result from competition possibly resulting in displacement of other animals.

Endangered, threatened, and rare plants and animals may be found in each of the proposed project areas, including those listed under the California Endangered Species Act, the Federal Endangered Species Act, and by the California Native Plant Society. The extent of potential impacts to these species is unclear. Wild turkeys have existed in many counties in California for several decades, and to date no negative impacts to any organisms have been documented. The Department will evaluate the potential effects of the proposed releases to these species through a review of the available literature on wild turkey habitat relationships, foraging ecology, and food habits.

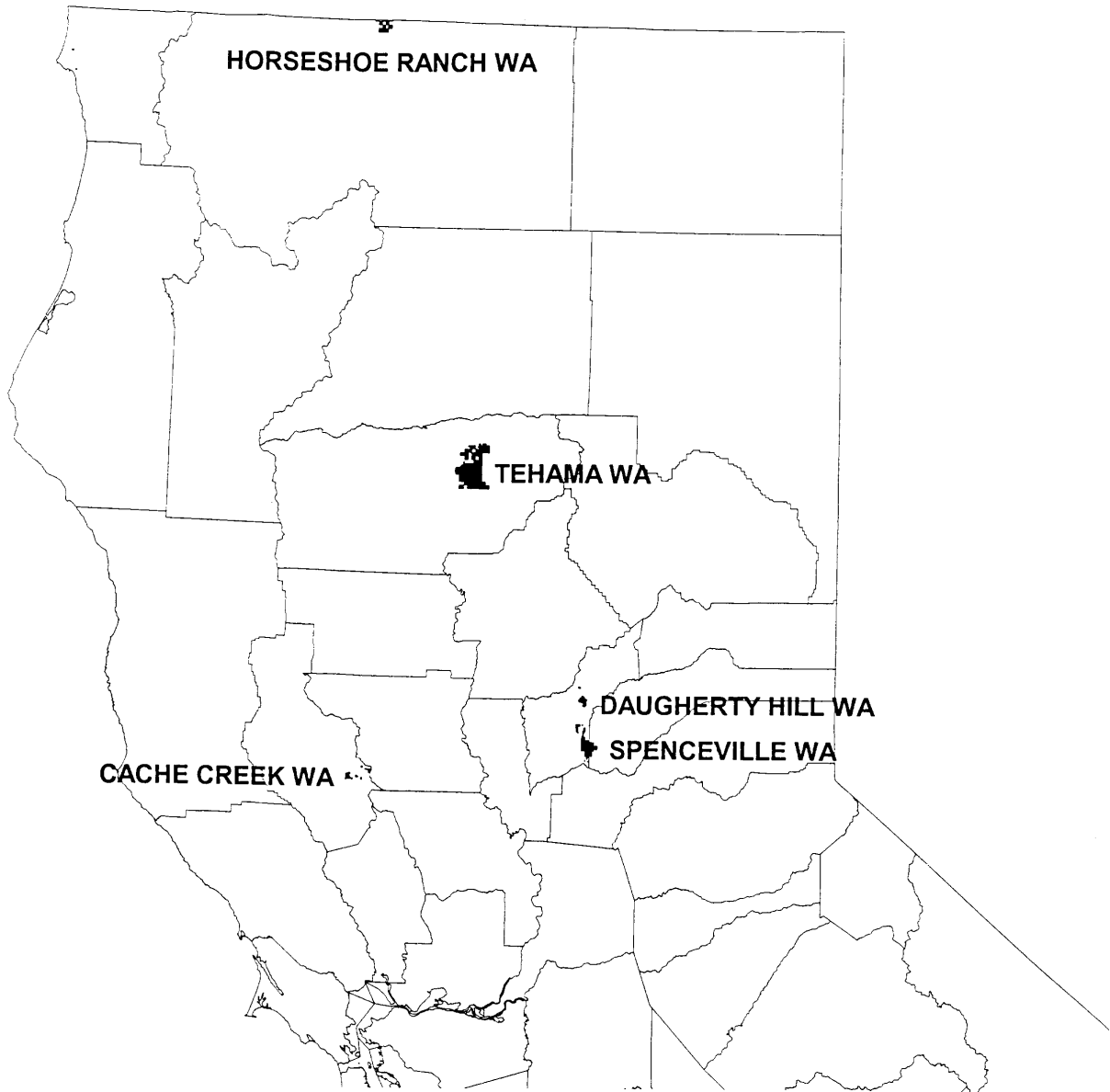
Removal of non-desirable wild turkeys may impact local populations of wild turkeys in the removal area. The preferred and primary method for removal of non-desirable turkeys will be by trapping and translocation, however, some circumstances may require removal through lethal means.

Wild Turkey Population Enhancement Proposed Release Sites Statewide



- Proposed Release Sites
USFS Lands

Department of Fish and Game Wildlife Areas with Established Wild Turkey Populations



APPENDIX G

Environmental Checklist Form

1. Project title: Wild Turkey Population Management and Enhancement
2. Lead agency name and address:
Department of Fish and Game
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1270
Sacramento, California 95814
3. Contact person and phone number: David S. Zezulak, Ph.D.
4. Project location: attached
5. Project sponsor's name and address:
Department of Fish and Game
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1270
Sacramento, California 95814
6. General plan designation: N/A 7. Zoning: N/A
8. Description of project: (Describe the whole action involved, including but not limited to later phases of the project, and any secondary, support, or off-site features necessary for its implementation. Attach additional sheets if necessary.)
attached
9. Surrounding land uses and setting: Briefly describe the project's surroundings:
attached
10. Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.)
none

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology /Soils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning |

<input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Noise	<input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance	

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- ☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☒ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature 

June 16, 2000
Date

Scott C. Gardner
Printed name

David S. Zezulak, Ph.D.
For

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except "No Impact" answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A "No Impact" answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose

SAMPLE QUESTION

Issues:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
<u>I. AESTHETICS</u> -- Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<u>II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES:</u> In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<u>III. AIR QUALITY</u> -- Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:

a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

iv) Landslides? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS --

Would the project:

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- Would the project:

a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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X. MINERAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

XI. NOISE --

Would the project result in:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING -- Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS --

Would the project:

a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE --

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant With Mitigation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Explanation of potentially significant impacts determined in the initial study.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- a) There are several sensitive species, including species listed under the Federal and California Endangered Species Acts, at each of the proposed release sites. The introduction of wild turkeys to these areas has potential to impact these species through predation and competition for resources.
- b) Because introduced wild turkeys may have an impact on sensitive species as described in section IVa, there may also be an impact to sensitive natural communities.
- d) The introduction of wild turkeys could have an impact to established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors similarly to the impacts described in section IVa.
- f) Because wild turkeys may impact sensitive species as described earlier, they may impact areas adopted as a Habitat Conservation Plan. Wild turkeys may also be removed from areas in southern California that are part of the Natural Community Conservation Planning area. Because wild turkeys are not a native component of those ecosystems, removal should not be significant.

IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING

- b) If an areas adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect contains sensitive biological resources, the project may have an impact to those biological resources as previously described in section IV.
- c) If a habitat conservation plan contains sensitive biological resources, the project may have an impact to those biological resources as previously described in section IV.